

# IEIP Brief

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IEIP Thailand has entered its second quarter of operations with new office space and a more formalized relationship with the Ministry of Public Health. On January 23, U.S. Ambassador Johnson cut the ribbon to formally open a lovely "double-wide" trailer that will serve as IEIP headquarters during renovations of the permanent laboratory and office spaces. A working group has been convened to guide IEIP collaborations with the Ministry, and has begun work on a 5-year strategic plan to broadly outline priorities for surveillance, research, training, and outbreak support.



## Research

The Leptospirosis/Febrile Illness Study is a collaborative project in 4 district hospitals in Chiang Rai and Khon Kaen provinces to address the recent dramatic increase in reported cases of leptospirosis. The study has completed staff training and begun enrolling patients. This study seeks to identify causes of febrile illness, identify clinical and laboratory discriminators for leptospirosis, dengue fever, typhoid fever, meloidosis, murine and scrub typhus, explore interaction with HIV, and identify new infections such as tick typhus, bartonellosis and ehrlichiosis that contribute to febrile illness.

## Surveillance

In February, NCID/OD Information Technology Chief, Rodney Murray, visited the IEIP offices in Bangkok. The main purpose of the trip was to design an Internet-based surveillance system that will link hospital and laboratory field sites with a central data repository at the Ministry of Public Health. This electronic system will facilitate rapid reporting and analysis of important surveillance data.

## Outbreak Response

In April, several 2<sup>nd</sup> year Thai FETP fellows will travel to Atlanta to work with a CDC mentor for a few weeks and then attend the annual EIS conference. IEIP staff has helped match up three fellows with mentors in NCID.

Thai FETP fellows	NCID mentor	Pathogen/Disease
Dr. Chitlada Utaipiboon	Dr. Jamie Childs	Scrub typhus
Dr. Manu Sukonsakul	Dr. Danny Feikin	Bacterial pneumonia
Dr. Vorasith Sornsrivichai	Dr. Joe Bresee	Rotavirus



## Training

In response to urgent requests from regional laboratories and public health professionals, the IEIP collaborated with the Thai NIH and the Southeast Asia Regional Office of WHO (SEARO) to sponsor a three-day anthrax training conference in early December. More than 60 scientists from 16 countries attended the training in Bangkok that included both wet-laboratory training and discussion of the public health management of anthrax exposure. Participants concluded the training by developing an outline of a bioterrorism response plan for their respective countries.